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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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Comments:

- 1. On page 4, Vol'no Nayemniye should read Volno-Nayemnyy.
- 2. On page 5, Lebedeni should read Lebedinyy.
- 3. On page 5, Yakut should probably be Yakutsk.
- 4. On page 5, Vasilevskie should read Vasilyevskiy.
- 5. On page 5, Verkhni Kuranakh should read Verkhniy Kuranakh
- 6. On page 5, Peti-Letka should read Pyatiletka.
- 7. On page 5, Tirkanda, should read Tyrkanda.

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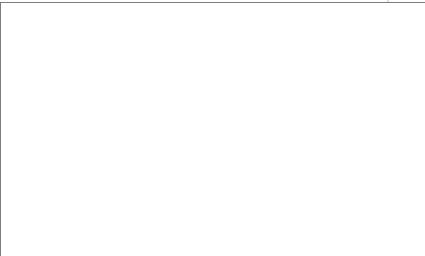
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MVD GUARDS AND PRISONS IN THE ALDAN (5837N-12524E), THE USSR, AREA 50X1

A. MVD GUARD UNIT AT NIZHNIY KURANAKH

[redacted] the gold fields at NIZHNIY KURANAKH, near the city of ALDAN (5837N-12524E) in the Yakutsk Autonomous Republic, Eastern Siberia, [redacted] observe an unidentified MVD guard unit made up of about 20 officers and 200 EM. these individuals referred to themselves as "MVD Guard Personnel" (Okhrana MVD) but Source did not know whether this was an official designation. 50X1

1. Composition of Personnel

Source said that these men came from all parts of the USSR. All the EM appeared to be in poor health, and he thought that they were physically unfit for line outfits. One EM [redacted] had a bad heart, and another had some sort of skin disease. 50X1

These men [redacted] were called up for service in the same manner as were others who were inducted into the Soviet Army. Source said that they were found unfit for the army and were thereby assigned to this type of unit. He added that the ages of the EM ranged from 20 to about 27 years of age. The reason that the age range was so large, Source explained, was that some of these men were originally found physically unfit but after a period of time their condition improved and they were then inducted. 50X1

2. Morale Factors Within the Unit

a. Rations

Source said that these guards were fed a special diet which he called the "9th Norm". This diet included milk, butter, cheese and eggs and allegedly was the same as that fed to the Air Force and Navy. The Soviet Army, he said, was fed by the "2d Norm", which did not include any of the aforementioned foods. He had no further information on ration "norms".

b. Permission to bring wives of EM to Duty Station

Married EM, of whom there were a considerable number, were permitted to have their wives with them. Source never saw any children in the area and did not know whether children were permitted there or not. Enlisted men of the unit went very often on leaves of unknown duration. He said that some of them wore civilian clothing when they went on leave.

c. State of Morale

Source stated that all of the conscript guards at NIZHNIY KURANAKH appeared to be content with their assignment, because the food and the pay was good. For example, a private in this unit received 280 rubles per month. (Source had no other pay data.) In addition, those who were married could have their wives with them.

3. Uniforms

All of the EM of the unit wore red shoulderboards with light blue piping, as did many unit officers. The highest ranking unit officer whom Source could remember was a major (nu). There were several uniformed women doctors with this unit who wore the medical officer's narrow silver shoulderboard with the metallic medical emblem. Source had never seen or heard of a re-enlistee (sverkhsrochnik) in this unit, but he could not say that there were none.

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4. Unit Compound and Installations

Source stated that the unit (Voyenny Gorodok) was located in an unfenced area on the outskirts of NIZHNIY KURANAKH and comprised about 15 wooden buildings. In this military community, there was a bakery that provided the bread for the prisoners and the guard personnel. Source observed both civilians and prisoners working in this bakery and also saw some civilians employed in the unit headquarters as clerks.

During several conversations with EM of this unit, Source was told that all the EM were conscripted for two years.

5. Weapons, Equipment and Transportation

He said that five ZIS-5 trucks were organic to this unit. Concerning weapons he stated that all the guards carried as individual weapons a PPSH SMG. About 20 dogs were with this unit for guard purposes. Source had no further information concerning officer personnel, why EM were selected for this duty, organization, training, equipment or other aspects of this unit's activities, except for some brief details of their prisoner guarding activities.

B. TWO PRISONS AT NIZHNIY KURANAKH

1. Installations and Types of Prisoners

Located near the MVD caserne were two prisons comprised of wooden buildings surrounded by barbed wire. Guard towers were at each of the four corners, and spotlights illuminated the perimeter at night. One prison contained felons, such as murderers and the like; they were the only long term prisoners who were considered to be extremely dangerous and often violent, and they never left the compound. Source knew nothing further concerning this compound.

The second which contained about 2,000 male inmates, held comparatively short term prisoners. These latter were used to supply the labor needed for the mines in the immediate area. They were called "Zakonvoirovani Kadri" (literally, "Convoyed Cadre"). [redacted] letters "ZK" stamped on work orders at the mines but he could recall nothing further on the work orders. 50X1

Source believed that most of the personnel of the second prison holding short termers consisted of ex-soldiers. Once, early in 1953, he saw a trainload of officers and EM who were brought as prisoners from Germany. They were wearing Soviet Army uniforms without shoulderboards. He thought that this group numbered about 800 men. He said that some members of this group told him where they came from; they stated that most of them were sentenced because of excessive drinking and fraternization in East Germany. 50X1
[redacted] the average sentence of the members of this group was from six to ten years.

2. Guarding of Prisoners En Route to Work

Source stated that prisoners were marched an average distance of four to five kilometers daily, seven days a week to and from the mines. They marched in groups of about 400, with about 20 guards per group. The guards came from the previously described NIZHNIY KURANAKH MVD unit. The roads to the mines were fenced with barbed wire about three meters high on both sides. Source said that there were usually three guards in front of the column of prisoners, several on the outside of the fences and the rest at the rear with the officer in charge. Source added that usually there were also two dogs and their handler at the rear of the column.

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senior Lieutenant sentenced to seven years for fraternization. This individual was released after serving two years, however, and took a job in the gold fields as a civilian employee (Vol'no-Nayomniy). 2

There was another man, whom Source described as a Latvian, who was released from this prison in Sep 52. After his release this man remained in the area and married. By trade he had been a machinist and auto-mechanic and upon his release, he was offered a job as a tractor mechanic which paid 1,400 rubles per month. But he chose to be a tractor driver, which paid from 4,000 to 5,000 rubles per month.

4. Treatment of Prisoners

Source stated that the prisoners were guaranteed 800 grams of bread a day, but he did not know what the three meals a day actually consisted of. He said that the prisoners were paid for their work in amounts unknown to him, and could make purchases in the store that was located in the prison. In this store some items of clothing, food and toilet articles could be bought. Some of the prisoners received money from home as well. Source said that if a prisoner exceeded his monthly quota in the mines, his sentence was shortened. If 131 percent of the norm was reached the sentence was shortened by one month, if 141 percent by two months and if by 151 percent by three months.

C. OTHER MVD UNITS OF SIMILAR TYPE

Source was told by some of the EM of the unit in NIZHNIY KURANAKH that all the enlisted personnel in similar units in the northern areas of the country also served two years. EM who were stationed in the central USSR served a three year tour, however. It was common knowledge in the ALDAN area that prior to 1953, all conscripts in similar units had to serve three years. During 1953 an order was issued cutting the tour to two years for men serving in the north, because of the unfavorable climatic conditions there.

D. OTHER PRISONS IN THE ALDAN AREA

1. The ALDAN Prison

Source knew that there was a small third prison in ALDAN proper that served as a collection point for prisoners being sent to the large labor camps near the mines (including the one at NIZHNIY KURANAKH). This ALDAN prison was guarded by volunteer demobilized military personnel 3 who still wore their old military uniforms and shoulderboards. He was told that their pay was 800 rubles a month, while the prison first sergeant, a woman, received 1,300 rubles a month.

2. Location of Other Prisons

Source estimated that there were about 20,000 prisoners in the ALDAN area. He named the following villages in the vicinity of ALDAN where other similar labor prisons were located. Those which he had visited, and which were guarded by MVD personnel of the type guarding the NIZHNIY KURANAKH prisoners, are marked with an asterisk. Source had no further information on these prisons or their location.

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LEBEDINI *

YAKUT * There were two prisons here; one all male and the other all female.

ARTASALA - 7 km from ALDAN

NEMGERKAN *

IRGENKANSK

TAMOTSKI

VASILEVSKIE *

VERKHNI KURANAKH *

BEZPRIZORNIM *

SELENGDAR

PETI-LETKA * All women

TIRKANDA *

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Comment 1: Source had no further information on MVD troops of any type.

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Comment 2: [redacted] in regard to Vlassovite ex-convicts in the ALDAN area.

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Comment 3: Although Source knew these individuals as "Vol-no-Nayomniye" (civilian volunteers); other Sources have used the term "Voyennizirovannaya Okhrana" (Militarized Guard) to describe similar units.

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